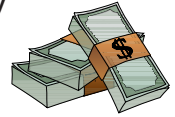# How to Plan Good Projects

How to Get Money for Projects

Sometimes it may cost money to do a project. You may need to buy paper or other materials for your project. You may have to travel or make long distance phone calls. You may even need to pay someone to help you carry out the project.

There are places where groups can get money to do projects that are important to them. Places that give money for projects are often called a "foundation," "funder," "fund" or "grant program." Each funder has its own rules for who can get money and what they can do with it. All funders want to make the world a better place. But each funder has a different idea of what will make things better. It is important to find a funder that thinks what you want to do is important.

How to ask for money for a project

To ask for money, you must fill out an application called a "grant proposal." It tells the program what you will do with the money they give you. Application forms often ask about

- what problem or question the project is about,

- why that problem or question is important,

- what is already known about the problem or question,

- how you plan to answer the question (that is, the method you will use),

- how you will make sure the participants in your project are treated well,

- who will carry out the project (and the background or experiences they have that will help them do a good job on the project),

- how long each step of the project will take,

- what you will do with the results of your project (for example, how you will share what you learn) and how you will use the results to make people's lives better,

- how much money you need to pay for people's time, travel, materials, and sharing the results of the project, and

- how you will let people know who gave you money to do the project.

How funders pick which projects get money

Sometimes there is a date when the funder must have all the proposals. After that date, the funder looks at all the proposals and decides which ones to give money to. It may take several months for them to read all the proposals and pick which ones to give money to. The funder looks at the proposal to see if

- the information it plans to gather will answer the question it asks,

- the project will treat all participants fairly,

- the proposal has the right amount of money to finish the project, and

- the project topic fits with what that grant program believes is important.

So it is important to write a proposal that funders can understand. A good proposal makes them excited about what you want to do. It is a good plan to ask someone to look at your proposal to see if it is clear and exciting. Sometimes staff of the funder can look over your proposal ahead of time. They can tell you what is missing or what needs to be said better. But you must give them *at least a month* before the deadline to read your proposal and help you.

If your project does not get money, you can ask what will make the project better. If your project topic does not fit with what the grant program thinks is important, they may be able to tell you about another funder to try.